Race and Masculinity
A Comparison of Asian and Western Models in Men's Lifestyle Magazine Advertisements

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Abstract
This study examines how men of different races are displayed in terms of masculinity types and product types by analyzing the content of 636 ads collected from the three most popular men’s lifestyle magazines in Taiwan, China, and the United States between 2008 and 2010. Western models were found more frequently portrayed as Tough, Macho, and Androgynous, but less frequently than Asian models as Vigorous and Sunny. Global marketers use more Asian models when targeting Asian markets than when targeting American markets. Racial difference was also revealed in types of advertised products.

Introduction
Since the 1950s, there has been a dramatic increase in the commercial representation of the male body in the Western media, most notably in films, as well as in television and print advertisements. The male models represent the ideal image of masculinity. Advertisers associate their products with these ideal images as a means of selling a wide range of male products.

Subsequent to the 1950s, the increased commercial representations of masculinity in Western media have shifted from hard work, thrift, and production to personal pleasure, stylistic expression, and commodity consumption. 1 Males have more recently developed a stronger interest in personal grooming, being more self-conscious about their bodies and more responsible for their personal appearance. 2 Consequently, males have become more susceptible to the allure of the consumer market. 3

The most desired images of masculinity initially and most extensively occur in men’s lifestyle magazines. 4 An increasing number of men’s lifestyle magazines have appeared in recent years to cater to the burgeoning interest of male readers in health, fitness, tourism, leisure, fashion, grooming, relationships, sex, technology, finance, and popular culture. The advertising content of these publications invariably centers on representations of the male body that presuppose the consumption of commodities. 5 European and North American media conglomerates began to export their most popular titles to Asia following the opening of the publishing markets in the 1980s. These titles are conspicuously attentive to Western and youth cultures, and mainly advertise Western brand-name products. 6

Masculinity refers to culturally defined traits, which are appropriate to, and usually associated with, men. 7 As a social construction of maleness, the construction of masculinity has been found to vary across cultures. The globalization of the media has intensified the conflict, competition, and negotiation among multiple masculinities from
different cultures. Globalization theory suggests that the European and the North American media predominantly supply the content, design the commodities, control the production process, and accumulate the resources. Audiences are thereby socialized in such a way that men’s place in non-Western gender relations is redefined in terms of a uniform global hegemonic masculinity. According to Nielsen, Asia recorded the largest growth in the sale of male personal care products. Although previous studies have examined representations of Asian men, the context of advertising in Asia that frames these representations has yet to be adequately acknowledged by existing literature. Research on men’s lifestyle magazines has hitherto been limited to case studies of the representation of masculinities in the United States and the United Kingdom.

In addition to a variety of social factors, cross-cultural differences are also an important consideration with regard to global marketing. In this respect, multinational corporations are investing billions of dollars in the development and marketing of global products. On the one hand, to increase both the effectiveness and the efficiency of their advertising campaigns, they continuously generalize representations of masculinity by standardizing their techniques of representation (e.g., Western models, location, music, and clothing). Consequently, there has been a globalization of Western advertising conventions. For example, female Indian models now typically pose in manners that conform to Western representations of women. On the other hand, global marketers localize their representations of masculinity by matching the models with the cultural values and needs of the target audience. According to advertising theories, advertising campaigns take effect through consumers’ identification with, and emulation of, the models’ bodies and fashion sense (e.g., their race, style, dress, shape, and size). To be responsive to the cultures of the target countries and yet retain the equity of its brand, a global marketer would find it much easier to replace the race of the model with the most popular race of the local audience rather than to change the advocated masculinity. However, the replacement also needs to consider the type of product being advertised because the local audience may associate different racial groups with different product types and masculinity traits.

This study aims to examine how different cultures visually represent the ideal image of masculinity in the mass media and how international advertisers associate masculinity types with certain racial groups and product categories. With a view to redressing the cross-cultural balance, this study uses content analyses of advertisements collected from men’s lifestyle magazines in Taiwan, China, and the United States to compare their representations of masculinities and assess how the differences are moderated by race and product category. These findings can help to understand how social norms, economic development, and race influence media representation of masculinity and male body image.

In the operationalization of masculinity types, we used Yuan and Shaw’s seven visual categories of masculinity. Yuan and Shaw compared the visual categories of masculinity between Taiwanese and American men’s lifestyle magazine ads and found that the Trendy and Cool type of masculinity is most commonly used in Taiwanese magazine ads, while the Stern and Sophisticated category is most often used in American magazine ads.

**Literature Review**

**Masculinity Research and Masculinity Types**

The definition of masculinity overlaps conceptually with manhood, male identity, manliness, and men’s roles. Masculinity refers to psychological and behavioral traits that are defined by the culture as typical and appropriate to a man. In this study, we examined these masculinity traits that are reflected in the looks of male models, which are the major distinction between “new man” and traditional masculinity. Masculinities and male bodies are socially and historically constructed, created, and reinforced by representations of gender in the mass media. Media representations of masculinity influence the self-identification and self-evaluation of individual males.

Most previous research on the representation of men in advertising has analyzed the construction of hegemonic masculinities (i.e., the most honored or desired masculinities in a society). In this context, hegemonic refers to the setting of standards that judge the achievements of all men and subordinate women. For example, the traditional Western ideal of masculinity was a breadwinner, whose muscular body symbolized desirable (masculine) attributes such as production, work, and responsibility, rather than consumption, display, and pleasure. With the rise of
the male consumer market, the image of the “new man” in the United States has emphasized self-gratification in terms of the cultivation of personal style through commodity consumption.\textsuperscript{22} In contrast, the traditional Asian (Confucian) ideal of masculinity focused on literary and cultural achievement.\textsuperscript{24} Representations of hegemonic masculinity are constituted by discourses concerning physical appearance (e.g., strength and size), affects (e.g., work ethic and emotional strength), sexualities (e.g., homosexual vs. heterosexual), behaviors (e.g., violent and assertive), occupations (e.g., manager, executives, or professionals), and domination (e.g., the subordination of women and children).\textsuperscript{26}

Different classes, races, social divisions, generations, regions, and institutions desire different types of masculinities, because each has its own unique social lives and histories.\textsuperscript{28} To understand the masculinity types used in advertising, this study examines the seven masculinity types identified by Yuan and Shaw: Tough and Macho, Refined and Gentle, Stern and Sophisticated, Vigorous and Sunny, Trendy and Cool, Sensual and Sexy, and Androgynous. The appendix presents the definition of each masculinity type.\textsuperscript{27} This cross-cultural study attempts to determine whether, at the global level, there is any commonality in the manner in which media from different countries construct masculinity by associating races with certain masculinity types and product categories.

Cross-cultural Comparison of Masculinity Types

The representations of Western masculinity have also been adjusted by localization in Asia.\textsuperscript{29} Chinese and Taiwanese audiences are not only influenced by European and North American content, but also by Japanese and Korean popular culture, as demonstrated by the coalescing of the identities of Asian audiences as “imagined communities” through the viewing, for example, of Japanese idol dramas.\textsuperscript{30} With the increasing integration of Asian cultures, additional comparative research on Southeast Asia can help to improve understanding of the complex process of constructing masculinity in postcolonial and postmodern times.\textsuperscript{31}

This study focused on Taiwan, China, and the United States for a cross-cultural comparison.\textsuperscript{32} According to Frith and Feng, international advertisements are influenced by both economic and cultural factors because men’s lifestyle magazines are not only profit-seeking businesses, but also disseminators of culture.\textsuperscript{33} The country selection facilitated the simultaneous examination of two societal factors, namely, cultural norms and economic development, in terms of their impact on the representation of masculinities. Regarding the operationalization of these two variables, the United States has a Western culture and a well-developed economy, whereas China has an Eastern culture and a developing economy.

Taiwan has a liberal economic system broadly comparable with that of the United States and the same cultural traditions (characterized as Confucian) as China. Taiwan’s economy took off (average GDP growth was 6.19% from 1960 to 1999) more than ten years earlier than China’s (during the late 1980s). Despite its Chinese cultural origins, Taiwanese culture is also heavily influenced by American popular culture, having received aid from the United States from 1951 to 1965.

Masculinity and Race

Over the past few decades, a number of studies have focused on the race of models featured in commercials. Global media tend to follow the imagery of North American and European models.\textsuperscript{34} For example, the blonde Brazilian television superstar Xuxa is extremely successful in part because she has reproduced this imagery of femininity.\textsuperscript{35} In addition, Caucasian models were uniformly found more often than other races, even in the advertisements of magazines marketed at Asian women.\textsuperscript{36} However, Iwabuchi noted a shift in Japan from a preference for Western models to Japanese models.\textsuperscript{37} The increased popularity of Japanese models provides media consumers with a specifically Japanese redefinition of masculinity.\textsuperscript{38}

Advertisers try to match the models with the cultural values, social norms, local fashions, and needs of the target audience; advertising takes effect through a process of identification with the featured models.\textsuperscript{39} The ability of the audience to identify racially with the models can determine an advertisement’s persuasiveness. For example, Caucasian males considered an advertisement more truthful and convincing when a Caucasian model was used in an advertisement, as opposed to when an Asian model was used.\textsuperscript{40} Thus, in each country, the race of a model depends on the need for the advertising campaign to elicit a positive response from the target audience.\textsuperscript{41} If the comparisons in this study between any pair of the three societies fail to show any significant difference, it implies that differences in economic development and cultural tradition have a weak impact on the races of the models in men’s lifestyle.
magazine ads. In such cases, the impact of the global media overcomes both domestic factors. Thus, the first hypothesis regarding the relationship between magazine nationality and model’s race has two parts:

**H1a:** The races of the models used in Asian magazines would differ from those used in American men’s lifestyle magazine advertisements.

Taiwan is more westernized than China because of the advanced development of the market economy and the significant influence of American popular culture. Given that the number of Western models used in advertisements reflects degree of Westernization, the next part of the hypothesis is:

**H1b:** Taiwanese magazine advertisements would use more Western models than Chinese magazine advertisements.

People associate different masculinity traits with different racial groups, which are usually called stereotypes. Criticism of advertising usually focuses on its creation and perpetuation of ethnic stereotypes. For example, the dominant Western image of the African American male used to be ugly, violent, and lascivious. The African American man represented the body; Caucasian symbolized the mind. The purpose of the colonial stereotype of African man was to provide an important contrast with “true” Caucasian manliness, as a means of ensuring the social and economic subordination of African American men. The American media are accused of perpetuating this image with repeatedly carefree caricature.

The colonial stereotypes of Asian men are distinct. The image of Asian men in Western colonial discourse includes characteristics such as mute, passive, charming, decadent, hypersensitive, and androgynous. In the nineteenth century, media discourse on Indian men in Western media often focuses on their smaller size, effeminacy, and practice of marrying “child brides,” all to rationalize colonial oppression. Similarly, in colonial days, Western representations of Chinese men were as effeminate, weird, and evil. Throughout the history of America, Asian men have been portrayed as weak, nerdy, feminine, and asexual, compared with the idealized form of white masculinity. The erotic fantasies about the oriental body were “placed mid-way between Europe’s state of enlightenment and the savage darkness and danger of Africa.”

While Caucasian models in American advertisements usually act as authority figures, African American and Asian models often appear in supporting roles. African Americans were less likely than Caucasians to be shown as passive/emotional, in cross-sex interaction, as sex objects, as spouses, or in a domestic setting. African American models wore animal prints more often, posed more provocatively, and revealed more of their body than white models.

Asian characters tended to be young and passive, characteristics that may be perceived as hard working, compliant, and achievement-oriented. Asian Americans are also typically characterized as diligent, smart, and serious. In women’s magazine advertisements, Western female models were more likely to be portrayed as sexy, whereas Asian female models tended to be portrayed as cute girl-next-door types. Therefore, based on the finding that people tailor different masculinity traits to different racial groups, the second hypothesis of this study is:

**H2:** The masculinity types used for Asian models would differ from those used for Western models.

**Race and Product Categories**

Product category has been one of the major variables of gender portrayal research since the 1970s. A recent review of forty-four studies of gender portrayals in more than twenty countries found significant cross-cultural differences in terms of the product categories of television advertisements. Frith, Shaw, and Cheng argued that because the construction of beauty is connected to culture, the beauty products advertised would differ from country to country. On the other hand, consumers’ desires and affordability determine the choice of advertised products. Therefore, economic development is another social factor to be addressed. Because the economies of the United States and Taiwan developed earlier than China’s economy, the products advertised in their respective magazines may differ significantly. Hence, the next hypothesis is as follows:

**H3:** The product categories advertised in American, Taiwanese, and Chinese men’s lifestyle magazines would differ from one another.
Product category also has a significant relationship with race. As has been mentioned, advertisers’ choice of different types of ethnic models depends on their ethnic targets. For example, Caucasian consumers responded more positively to Caucasian models than to Asian models in advertisements for products related to social status, whereas Caucasian consumers responded more positively to Asian models than to Caucasian models in advertisements for technology and products associated with Eastern manufacturing.

Research findings regarding women’s representation in advertising could facilitate understanding of the relationship between race and product types for men. To be specific, South Korean advertisers regularly used Western fashion models to advertise erotic products (such as lingerie), and used East Asian models to advertise household or domestic products. Asian models appeared more often in advertisements for beauty products (including skin and hair care products), whereas Western models appeared more frequently in clothing advertisements.

African American models were rarely shown in advertisements for technical and scientific products, which suggests a stereotypical media image of a lack of education and intelligence. When represented in financial services or food advertising, African American models were usually physically striking. African American models were most highly represented in public service, finance/insurance, automobile, and travel advertising. Asian models tended to appear in advertisements for engineering technology, in popular business press publications, and in business settings. This discussion leads to the next hypothesis of this study:

H4: Male models from different races would be used in different product categories.

Method

This study examines the representations of masculinity in men’s lifestyle magazines. Content analysis was performed on the advertisements featured in three issues from 2008 to 2010 of the three most popular magazines in the United States (GQ, Esquire, Men’s Health), China (Esquire, Men’s Health, and FHM), and Taiwan (GQ, Cool, and Men’s UNO). The magazines’ circulations from the United States, China, and Taiwan were obtained from the Audit Bureau of Circulations (www.accessabc.com), Century Chinese International Media Consultation LTD (www.chinesebk.com), and Brain magazine (July 2009), respectively.

It is noteworthy that the most popular men’s lifestyle magazines in different countries have distinct ownership. All the Chinese men’s lifestyle magazines that were used in this study have foreign titles, but both Taiwanese magazines have local owners. Men’s lifestyle magazines were initially introduced to China as international titles in the early 2000s. Even though several local titles have emerged, they have not yet attained popularity. Despite using many local models, international titles tend to adopt the same standardized formats and conventions as their Western counterparts. In contrast, international men’s lifestyle magazines were introduced to the Taiwanese market in the mid-1990s, followed by the rapid development of local magazines. In 2009, the top two men’s lifestyle magazines were local, which would bear more local cultural elements than foreign titles. We chose this sampling because it is more representative of the reality, even though it was more difficult to detect cross-cultural differences.

To keep the sample at a manageable size, one issue of each magazine was chosen at random for each year from 2008 to 2010. The twenty-seven issues included 636 advertisements, all of which were analyzed. Holidays (i.e., Valentine’s Day, Christmas, or New Year’s Day) were avoided by substituting the most recent months because holiday advertisements tend to portray certain types of masculinity. The unit of analysis was a full-page advertisement. For each advertisement, only the main male model—the one occupying the most space overall or dominating the foreground—was coded. It was assumed that the main model was the most important character in the advertisements. If the same advertisement appeared in different magazine issues, it was included each time in the coding process because repetition is a strategy frequently used in advertising campaigns.

The masculinity categories as identified by Yuan and Shaw were used as part of this research. After carefully and repeatedly reading the visual images of the male models in magazine ads from the United States and Taiwan, the authors classified the images into seven different types of masculinity (see the appendix). While Trendy and Cool was the most common masculine ideal in Taiwanese men’s lifestyle magazine ads, Stern and Sophisticated was the most common type in American magazine ads.
The coding of the masculinity types was mutually exclusive. In addition to masculinity types, each male model in the advertisements was coded for his race (Asian, Caucasian, African American, mixed races, and others) and product category.

Two graduate students fluent in Chinese and English coded all the variables for the selected advertisements. The coders were trained on a separate Taiwanese sample to familiarize them with the coding scheme used in this study to categorize masculinity. After the formal coding, 149 ads (15.1% of the total) were randomly selected for an inter-coder reliability check. The inter-coder reliabilities for masculinity type, race, product type, and social group were satisfactory (Scott’s $p_i$ and Cohen’s $\kappa = .86, .96, 1, 1$ respectively).

Findings

Most of the male models in the total sample advertisements were Caucasians (74.6%), belonged to Refined and Gentle masculinity (28.1%), and were depicted in clothing (52.5%) advertisements. Except for masculinity types, racial categories and product categories significantly differed among the United States, Taiwan, and China. Table 1 shows the models in the advertisements from the three cultures had a significantly different racial distribution, $\chi^2 = 102.5$, df = 21, $p < .001$. Caucasian male models featured most frequently in the advertisements of all three societies under review, accounting for 91.1% in the United States, 56.4% in China, and 60.4% in Taiwan. At the same time, both Caucasian and African American models were featured more often in American men’s lifestyle magazine advertisements than in Asian magazine advertisements. Asian models appeared significantly more often in Taiwanese (36.3%) and Chinese (43.6%) magazine advertisements than in American magazine ads (1.3%). This finding was consistent with $H_1a$’s prediction that the races of the models used in Asian magazines would differ from those used in American men’s lifestyle magazine advertisements. In particular, Asian models were used more frequently in Asian magazines than in Western magazines, and Western models were used more often in Western magazines than in Asian magazines.

Even though there were more Caucasian and African American models and fewer Asian models in Taiwanese magazine advertisements than in Chinese magazine advertisements, the differences were not statistically significant. Hence, $H_1b$ was not supported. That is to say, the Taiwanese magazine advertisements did not use significantly more Western models than the Chinese magazine advertisements. As mentioned in the methods section, this may have resulted from our sampling of the magazines, given that all the Chinese magazines were foreign titles, whereas two of the Taiwanese magazines were local.

Crosstabs for races and other variables contained more than 20% of cells with a frequency of less than five. To obtain reliable chi-square results, Caucasian and African American models were combined into Western models. Mixed and other races were excluded. There were significant differences in the masculinity types for each race ($\chi^2 = 23.43$, df = 7, $p < .01$, see Table 2). Western models were more likely to be portrayed as Tough and Macho (11.9%) and Androgynous (3.2%) than were Asian models (3.9% and 0%, respectively). The Vigorous and Sunny type was used more often (20.2%) with Asian models than with Western models (10.8%). Of all the races, there were no significant differences in terms of Refined and Gentle, Stern and Sophisticated, Trendy and Cool, and Sensual and Sexy. Refined and Gentle and Trendy and Cool have been universally popular in advertisements from both Western and Asian countries. Therefore, $H_2$, that masculinity types would be used differently for Asian and Western models in men’s lifestyle magazine advertisements, was largely confirmed. In particular, Western models were portrayed more frequently as Tough, Macho, and Androgynous than were Asian models, whereas Asian models were more frequently portrayed as Vigorous and Sunny than were Western models.
Table 2.
Comparison of Masculinity Types and Product Categories for Asian and Western Models.

Clothing accounted for the largest proportion (52.5%) of advertisements in all three countries. Accessories (17.9%), followed by beauty and personal care (12.6%), were the most popular product categories. There was a significant difference in the product types advertised across cultures, $\chi^2 = 102.86$, df = 12, $p < .001$. Therefore, $H_3$, which predicted that different product categories would be advertised in magazines from different countries, was supported.

As shown in Table 1, food and beverages were present in 8.1% of advertisements in the United States, in contrast to the minimal proportion in Taiwan (0.5%) and China (3.6%). Beauty and personal care products were more popular in China (17.9%) and the United States (14.2%) than in Taiwan (7.4%). Clothing was advertised more often in American magazines (55.3%) than in Chinese magazines (43.8%), whereas accessories were advertised more often in Taiwan (29.6%) than in the United States (12%) and China (11.6%). China produced more automobile advertisements (12.5%) than Taiwan (9.6%) and the United States (0.3%). There were no significant cross-cultural differences regarding advertisements for entertainment and information.

There was also a considerable association between race and the product types ($\chi^2 = 111.36$, df = 21, $p < .001$) featured with the male models. There was a significant racial difference in the product types advertised. As shown in Table 2, Asian models (18.6%) appeared more often in advertisements for beauty and personal care products than did Western models (11.1%), whereas Western models (56.8%) appeared more frequently in clothing advertisements than did Asian models (35.7%). In addition, Asian models appeared more often in automobile (8.9%), electronics, and computer (7.2%) advertisements than the Western models (0.8% and 1.2%, respectively). Thus, $H_4$, which predicted that Western models in men’s lifestyle magazine advertisements would be used in different product categories than the Asian models, was confirmed.

Discussion and Conclusion

The major purpose of this research was to analyze advertisements collected from men’s lifestyle magazines in Taiwan, China, and the United States to see how men of different races are portrayed across cultures in terms of masculinity types and product types. In total, there are five major findings.

First, generally speaking, there were few significant differences in terms of masculinity types among the three societies. Advertisements from all three countries portrayed men similarly in terms of the seven masculinity types. Neither economic development nor cultural tradition had generated a significant difference in the representation of these masculinity types in men’s lifestyle magazines. Even though the men’s lifestyle magazines are locally published in Taiwan and foreign titles have local alliances in China, their advertisements portray masculinity in ways comparable with the American advertisements. Although traditionally, the Chinese ideal of masculinity focused on literary and cultural achievements, over the past ten years, Chinese men’s lifestyle magazine ads have embraced international standards of masculinity.

Among a wide variety of masculinity types, Refined and Gentle and Trendy and Cool were the top two, competing in each of the three societies. Refined and Gentle is the most popular type of masculinity used in Chinese advertisements, whereas Trendy and Cool is the most popular masculinity in American and Taiwanese advertisements. The most desired ideal of masculinity is a Caucasian portrayed as either Refined and Gentle or Trendy and Cool.

Clothing, accessories, grooming, and personal care products dominated more than 80% of the advertisements in men’s lifestyle magazines. These products are more likely to be associated with Trendy and Cool and Refined and Gentle masculinities than with other types. This reflects how the New Man is characterized by the refined and trendy outlook. With the boom in consumerism, these two types of masculinity have overlapped with the concept of metrosexuality, which developed in the 1980s and has become hegemonic in the West. In contrast to traditional Western masculinity, metrosexuality focuses on appearance and grooming, in response to the increasing availability of male personal care products and fashions. Both types of masculinities are copycat masculinities, which are the local translation of the globally hegemonic masculinity, centering on the “commodified male body.” Male consumers are repeatedly informed that their appearance can, and should, be manipulated and
enhanced through consumption.²⁶ Fashion (image, style, and appearance) has become central to representations of masculinity in magazine commercials.²² It should be pointed out that Connell’s concept of global hegemonic masculinity made no allowance for this aspect of masculinity.²²

Trendy and Cool was the most common masculine ideal in Taiwanese and American men’s lifestyle magazine ads. This finding is consistent with Yuan and Shaw’s study. This Western-styled masculinity has developed a global appeal, especially among young people, as a new way for Asian youth to express their private rebellion and absorb “the dominant mindset of consumerism.”²⁷ “Cool” is a new mode of individualism, more adaptable to a life of service and consumption than one of toil and sacrifice. Consumers are driven by a hidden competitive spirit to be Trendy and Cool, which drives new consumption, and simultaneously offers a handle by which Cool advertisers can steer the consumer in the desired direction.⁸⁰

Second, one of the most important findings was that even though Taiwan westernized earlier than China, Western models and Western type of masculinities were not significantly more prevalent in Taiwan than in China. This sheds light on how global advertisers perceive the most desired men’s image in these three different contexts. More specifically, when advertising global products, advertisers do not pay much attention to the degree of westernization of the consumers. Instead, to increase the efficiency of advertising campaigns, international advertisers tend to use the same standardized formats and conventions as their American counterparts. A contributing factor, as mentioned in the methods section, is the sampling of the magazines. All the Chinese men’s lifestyle magazines that were used have foreign owners aiming to familiarize Chinese male consumers with international products and a consumption-based lifestyle. In contrast, two of the Taiwanese magazines were local and may contain more local cultural elements than foreign titles.

Third, to increase the identification of local audience to their brands, global marketers use more Asian models when targeting Asian markets than when targeting American markets. This choice can increase the credibility and effectiveness of the advertisements.⁸³ However, instead of displaying traditional masculinity types, the Asian models are characterized by the refined and trendy types of masculinity. Both types of masculinity showed no significant differences between Asian models and Western models. They have become the most popular types of idealized image of masculinity that is applied to both Asian and Western models in men’s lifestyle magazine advertisements.

Again, the prevailing use of Western models in both China and Taiwan, two countries with predominantly Chinese populations, suggests that these societies are receptive to Western models and masculinity trends.⁸⁴ In a like manner, the findings from women’s magazines in China also challenged the cultural hybridity theory. Frith and Feng concluded that women’s magazines in China are hardly “hybrids” because they only reflect and transmit consumer values to serve the interests of global brands.⁸⁵

Fourth, it is interesting that Western models were portrayed more frequently as Tough and Macho, and Androgynous, whereas Asian models were portrayed more frequently as Vigorous and Sunny. This is not surprising because Western cultural traditions place a greater emphasis on fitness and masculinity as a measure of masculinity, while Asian models were often portrayed as young, passive, and compliant.⁸⁶ Although globalization has standardized the characteristics of the visual representations of masculinities from different countries, it has not eliminated the features of masculinity that are attached to different racial groups. In other words, the construction of masculinity is less determined by the host country’s cultural traditions and economic development than by a global discrimination based on racial archetypes.

These three types of masculinity are not among the most popular overall—they are the nonhegemonic patterns of masculinity. This fact, now and potentially over time, complicates the hegemonic work of advertising. According to Connell, nonhegemonic masculinities exist within their own subordinated class and racial milieu, and are much more liable to be stereotyped representations, rather than hegemonic masculinities.⁸⁷ International advertisers have eliminated racial differences in the most popular masculinity types, but associate certain nonhegemonic types of masculinity with certain racial groups. This association indicates that media representation works as a form of hegemony.⁸⁸ Future longitudinal research on the durability or survivability of nonhegemonic types of masculinity (in this study: Tough and Macho, Androgynous, and Vigorous and Sunny) can help facilitate understanding of the process and consequences of racial marginalization.
Finally, global advertisers chose the models’ race based on a consideration of product types and racial stereotypes. For example, Asian models were more likely to appear in advertisements for technology-related products (including automobiles, electronics, and computer advertisements) than were Caucasians and African Americans. Racial differences were also significant in the advertisements about men’s grooming and personal care products, in which Asian models appeared more frequently than Western models. Western models appeared more often in clothing advertisements. One possible explanation is that Western masculinity is constructed in terms of “the body” because clothing is related to the body, whereas Asian masculinity is constructed in terms of “the face” because Asian models feature more often in advertisements for grooming and personal care products. These findings reveal that advertisers (and their audiences) perceive Western men as distinguishable from Asian men. These findings suggest that there has been a stereotype for different racial groups in men’s lifestyle magazine advertisements based on the significant relationships between racial groups, product types, and masculinity types.

In addition, the representation of Stern and Sophisticated men as well as Sensual and Sexy men is neither racially nor culturally based. As a globally accepted masculinity type, Stern and Sophisticated coincides with Connell’s transnational business masculinity and Davis’s rational men, who control the key institutions of the global markets. Compared with the prevalence of the Sex Kitten type in women’s magazines (24%), we can conclude that both Western men and Asian men (6.6%) are generally not represented as sex objects.

This study has two main limitations. First, only the main male models who occupied the most space overall or dominated the foreground were examined and coded, as it was assumed that they were more important than the less dominant or less central figures. Future research could examine the less dominant figures, their interactions with their dominant counterparts, and how race moderates the interactions.

Second, this study analyzed the most desired image of masculinity in the most popular men’s lifestyle magazines because the new visual coding of masculinity occurs initially and most extensively in these magazines. However, according to Edwards, the major readers of men’s lifestyle magazines are young, middle class, Caucasian males. The characteristics of the readership (especially socioeconomic class and race) may influence the way men’s lifestyle magazines display and represent masculinities. Future research on other types of magazines with different demographics would extend the research by showing the extent to which class crosscuts the racial and ethnic aspects of masculinity types.

Appendix

Tough and Macho
With a traditional cowboy look and temperament, the model has a muscular physique and determined facial expression. The sharp, angular lines of his face speak of toughness and resolution. With tanned skin, and dressed in leather or cowboy clothes, the model appears—in either expression and/or posture—nomadically unkempt, strong-willed, and lion-hearted.

Refined and Gentle
With the look of a learned intellectual, the model appears cultured, polite, graceful, and well mannered. He is often dressed in a preppy style (e.g., shirts, argyle sweaters, etc.) and wears glasses. His hair is always neat and tidy, and his appearance is always clean and classic.

Stern and Sophisticated
With a confident and firm look, the model impresses the viewer as mature and reliable. He is dressed in formal attire (usually suits), and has a neat, sleek hairstyle. He is a mature man, with some character lines on his face. His gaze is focused. He often has a successful career.

Vigorous and Sunny
These models are cute in contrast to the stoic, distant, and manly idols of the past. Akin to a boy next door, the model often radiates coyness and innocence, capped with a brilliant smile. His skin is tanned. His clothing is sporty and casual. His look and posture are those of someone who is amiable and easygoing.

Trendy and Cool
This style originated from African American male street culture. Clothed and accessorized in the latest fashion, the model is likely to stand in a provocative posture and displays a freedom-loving and rebellious temperament. His facial expression is
either expressionless or aloof, thereby creating a sense of distance between him and his viewers. He often leers at people and assumes an indifferent and scornful attitude.

**Sensual and Sexy**

Often dressed in sexually arousing attire or revealing, tight-fitting clothes, such as a swimming suit or underwear, the model usually looks away from the camera and refrains from appearing smart and sophisticated or springy and sunny. His facial expression and posture—such as caressing his own body—appear unnatural because they are contrived to seduce viewers.

**Androgynous**

Characterized by exquisite features, the model dresses and behaves in a stereotypically feminine manner and/or wears makeup. He typically adopts a delicate, meek, and dependent posture. *Androgyny* is an essential component of traditional Japanese masculinity. Androgynous stars have become increasingly salient in Asian popular culture because Japanese popular culture is taking over the lead role from Western popular culture in Asia.²⁴

**Others**

Types that do not fit into the above categories.

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**Article Notes**

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**Notes**

- ⁵. Boni, “Framing Media Masculinities.”
- ¹¹. Katherine T. Frith and Subir Sengupta, “Individualism and Advertising: A


30. Yuan and Shaw, “Masculinities on Display.”

31. As per the rationale of Jian-Hua Zhu, David Weaver, Ven-hwei Lo,


43. Segal, *Slow Motion*.

44. Segal, *Slow Motion*.


48. Mercer and Julien, “Race, Sexual Politics and Black Masculinity.”


66. Gentlemen’s Quarterly (GQ) is an American monthly men’s magazine focusing on fashion, journalism, contemporary fiction, and service articles on fitness, grooming, and health. The magazine was launched in 1931 in the United States and is now owned by Condé Nast Publications. Taiwan GQ was launched in 1996, and China GQ was launched in 2009, and is published by the Trends Media Group. A typical GQ reader (in 2006) was a single (62%) male (73%) with a median age of 34.6 and a median income of $68,926.
67. *Esquire* is a men's magazine founded in the United States in 1932 and published by the Hearst Corporation. Taiwan *Esquire* was launched in the late 1980s and China *Esquire* was launched in 1999. Its target readers in Taiwan are mature businessmen with stable incomes.

68. *Men's Health* is an American men's lifestyle magazine owned by Rodale Company. It was first published in the United States in 1987 and in China in 2000. Its major topics include health, fitness, nutrition, relationships, travel, technology, fashion, and finance. A typical reader is a single (62%) male (73%) working full-time (62.3%), with the largest age category ranging from 25 to 34 (29%). Source: Roy Morgan Readership Survey April 2011—March 2012.

69. *For Him Magazine* (FHM) is owned by Bauer Media Group (GR) and was launched in the United States in 1957. The magazine was published in Taiwan in 2000 and in China in 2004. It focuses on sexual topics and targets heterosexual men.

70. Both Cool and *Men's UNO* are Taiwanese men's lifestyle magazines founded in 1997. City Publishing Ltd publishes *Cool* and Chic Group International Company Limited publishes *Men's UNO*. The major content of each includes fashion, popular culture, lifestyle, and electronics. Comparatively speaking, *Cool* targets a younger male population than *Men's UNO* and other men's lifestyle magazines.

71. Yuan and Shaw, “Masculinities on Display.”


73. Ricciardelli, Clow, and White, “Investigating Hegemonic Masculinity.”


77. Ricciardelli, Clow, and White, “Investigating Hegemonic Masculinity.”


80. Pountain and Robins, *Cool Rules*.

81. Hoy and Wong, “Model Ethnicity and Product Congruence.”

82. Frith, Cheng, and Shaw, “Race and Beauty.”

83. Frith and Feng, “Transnational Cultural Flows.”


85. Connell, “The Big Picture.”

86. Connell and Messerschmidt, “Hegemonic Masculinity.”


92. Darling-Wolf, “Women and New Men.”
